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but the Archbishop forestalled him by complaining on behalf of the Church. He claimed protection for the Abbey, and recounted the story of its late violation and of the horrible death of Haule. 'Certain of the Lords' in answer raised the general question of the privilege of Sanctuary, and exposed the injury it caused to the general weal. They hoped 'that nothing would be seized nor encroached on by the said clergy.' While admitting the right of the Church to protect crime, they called in question the legal warrant by which certain sanctuaries claimed also to protect debt and trespass. 'And on this there came into Parliament doctors of Theology, and Civil law, and other clerks on behalf of the King, who in the presence of the Lords and all the Commons made argument and proof against the prelates on the matter aforesaid by many colourable and strong reasons.'<sup>1</sup> One of these disputants was John Wycliffe. The paper he then read before the Estates has been fortunately preserved.<sup>2</sup> It shows the lines on which the controversy ran in these discussions, and proves beyond doubt that the Duke of Lancaster headed this attack on ecclesiastical privilege. Speaking for his patron and his party, Wycliffe declared that he would not attempt to defend the abominable slaughter of Haule, although he pointed out that the knight himself had been the first to draw sword in the church.<sup>3</sup> "What he undertook to defend, was the action of the officers in entering the precincts to make the arrest. He tried to show that the privilege of Sanctuary was illegal, though it was probably as legal as long custom could make it."<sup>4</sup>

It is far more interesting to consider Wycliffe's general arguments against the righteousness and expediency of Sanctuary. As is usual with him, he begins from the Bible. God established the cities of refuge for accidental homicide, not for wilful crime. Exodus xxi. 14 : \* If a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour to slay him with guile, thou shalt take him from mine altar that he may die.'<sup>5</sup> The right of Sanctuary was a flagrant defiance of justice; without justice the State could not stand. The argument of 'mercy'

<sup>1</sup> *Bat. Parl.*, Hi. 37, sees. 27-8. \* Chaps. vii.-xvi. of *De Mcc.*

» *De JSc.*, 150, 252, 266. \* *Ibid.*  
220-7, 229-31. \* *Ibid.* 148.